

Lakes Regional Board of Directors. The Lansing Area APRI Chapter recognized him earlier this year as a Role Model for his work in Civil Rights and the community.

Madam Speaker, I ask the House of Representatives to rise with me and applaud the work of a dear friend, Bruce G. McAttee. For many years an important member of my own campaigns, I consider Bruce a dear friend and skilled analyst. I value his capable, proficient expertise on a broad variety of subjects. I wish him the best as he enters this next phase of his life.

CONGRATULATING THE NATIONAL
JOINT APPRENTICESHIP TRAINING
COMMITTEE ON THEIR 20TH
NATIONAL TRAINING INSTITUTE

HON. JOHN D. DINGELL

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, July 31, 2009

Mr. DINGELL. Madam Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the National Joint Apprenticeship and Training Committee (NJATC) on the occasion of the 20th anniversary of their National Training Institute, which will be held this weekend at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor. It will also be my pleasure to address this gathering back home in Michigan's 15th Congressional District.

I wish to commend the NJATC's National Training Institute for what they do for working men and women across the country. I believe they serve as an example of the good work labor unions have done for this country. I think it is entirely appropriate that the 20th annual National Training Institute will be held in Michigan, the state that most have deemed the birthplace of the American labor movement. This is a point in which I take great pride, as Michigan has long had a history of looking out for our workers and supporting the growth and success of our labor unions.

The partnership of the National Electrical Contractors Association and the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers is unique and it has led to a special training institute that puts a value on skilled trade and allows apprentices to "earn while you learn." This is critical for those in Southeast Michigan and across the country, as they start their second career, or even begin their first. Skilled trades provide our families with respectable and fair wages, benefits that will provide for their families and training that will allow them to successfully complete various jobs within the electrical industry.

As the National Joint Apprenticeship & Training Committee enters its 68th year, I would like to once again commend them for their fine work and congratulate them for the more than 350,000 apprentices which they have skillfully trained. I look forward to their 20th National Training Institute and I am so pleased that they will be holding this special event in Michigan's 15th Congressional District.

RECOGNIZING GENERAL AVIATION

SPEECH OF

HON. ELEANOR HOLMES NORTON

OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 28, 2009

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, H. Res. 508 recognizes the contributions of general aviation and encourages general aviation activities. General aviation is a little recognized, major sector of the airline industry, which contributes \$150 billion to United States direct and indirect economic output. I also want to mention the Transportation Security Administration Reauthorization Act of 2009, which included an important section setting up a general aviation working group within the Aviation Security Advisory Committee, to advise the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) on security issues in general aviation. This advisory group was established after the TSA began rulemaking on the Large Aircraft Security Program that threatened to swallow general aviation amidst burdensome and unnecessary regulations, suited for large commercial aircraft. Longstanding unattended issues and insufficient attention to the nation's important General Aviation sector are finally getting the attention they deserve. Along with other members of the House Committee on Homeland Security, I intend to see that General Aviation security issues are treated uniquely for the sector they administer.

However, as most members who have sat in on any hearing with the FAA, TSA, DHS or any other security agency may now know, the District of Columbia's main airport, the Ronald Reagan Washington National Airport (DCA), is uniquely hampered by impossibly restrictive regulations that have destroyed general aviation in the nation's capital, and arbitrary practices may be spreading to others. In the Homeland Security Committee, we have taken the important first steps to give detailed attention to this major section of the airline industry to the new administration.

After 9/11 the restrictions on General Aviation in the nation's capital, in particular, became symbolic of arbitrary action against general aviation that could happen anywhere. Even though New York City was the epicenter of 9/11, the nation's capital is the only location that suffers under unique restrictions that have crippled general aviation here. In fact, there was no general aviation for four years. After joining in my complaints at hearings, the former Chairman of the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, DON YOUNG, threatened to subpoena any agency that did not comply with a bill that aimed to compel the resumption of general aviation flights at DCA and to hold them in contempt if they refused to appear before the committee to report on progress. As a result, a plan finally was put in place with requirements, but the DCA Access Standard Security Program (DASSP) was almost worse than no plan at all. Before 9/11, general aviation activity at DCA accounted for 1/3 (approximately 30,000) of the total annual operations at DCA. In contrast, in October 2005 when program DASSP began, operations averaged about one flight per week. Today, activity averages about three to four flights per day, about 1000 a year. The requirements in the DASSP include:

General aviation operators must adopt a security program, background checks on flight

crews, identify a security coordinator, and train on security procedures

All DASSP flights must carry an armed security officer

(ASO) on board (very few such accredited officers are available.)

Flights must depart from one of 27 TSA approved DASSP gateway airports. Full departure screening of crew, passengers, baggage, and aircraft by TSA security inspectors

Flights must request permission to operate in DCA no sooner than 72 hours in advance of the flight (due to DCA slot requirements) and no later than 24 hours in advance of the flight (for TSA security reviews) for each flight into DCA.

These same screening procedures must be used for flights departing DCA

Charges approximately \$230 are assessed to cover TSA's screening costs plus \$15/passenger for screening names against the No-Fly and Selectee lists

Requirements for an Armed Security Officer and use of a gateway airport are predictably, and we think, deliberately impossible for most operators to meet. TSA has approximately 200 registered operators in the DASSP, making the wait for an ASO intolerable.

However, the Department of Homeland Security has determined "that general aviation presents only limited and mostly hypothetical threats to security . . . (and) that the steps general aviation airport owners and managers have taken to enhance security are positive and effective." DHS goes further in its report on general aviation:

"The current status of [general aviation] operations does not present a serious homeland security vulnerability requiring TSA to increase regulatory oversight of the industry."

"Although [TSA's Office of Intelligence] has identified potential threats, it has concluded that most [general aviation] aircraft are too light to inflict significant damage, and has not identified specific imminent threats from general aviation"

Nevertheless, the nation's capital has been singled out as the only jurisdiction under particularly onerous, unnecessary and wasteful program restrictions. As the initial approach of TSA to general aviation in general showed, however, the entire general aviation sector was about to be buried by the Large Aircraft Security Program, until our committee said "NO!" The thoughtless creep mission of the TSA into General Aviation, and the total failure to weigh actual security risks against the implications of draconian security measures, was stopped by our Committee on Homeland Security. The District of Columbia general aviation community deserves the same respect and attention.

General aviation at DCA is not the only industry in the District of Columbia that has been wiped out by arbitrary and restrictive airspace regulations. The South Capitol Street Heliport is a commercial heliport that once served east coast cities such as New York, Miami and Boston. It continues to serve the Metropolitan Police Air Support Unit and the U.S. Park Police. The Heliport is also the point of evacuation for the Supreme Court and part of the Department of Defense Nightingale program. In fact, on 9/11 this heliport actually became the Air Control Command Tower when DCA was evacuated. Moreover, having shown it was a vital asset, not a liability, for two years after 9/11, under an agreement with the Secret Service—an agreement that was later